

REMARKS

Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a), stating that the features of a “silicone bead”, “tape”, and “elastomeric washer” as recited in Claim 12, and the features of a “tether”, “strap” and “tie” as recited in Claims 7, 19 and 29, must be shown in the figures or canceled from the claims. Accordingly, in response thereto, Applicant has now cancelled the foregoing features from the claims and, thus, respectfully submits that corrected drawing sheets incorporating the cancelled features are no longer required.

Examiner has recommended that Applicant include reference number “50” in Figures 3-5 for representing the “detents”. In response thereto, Applicant respectfully directs Examiner’s attention to the enclosed Replacement Sheets for Figures 3-5, wherein each Replacement Sheet now includes reference number “50” directed to the “detents”.

Examiner has rejected Claims 1-31 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, stating that the recitation of “said inner and outer tubular members forming a cavity therebetween when said members are engaged” of Claims 1, 13 and 23 is unclear. In response thereto, and in accordance with Examiner’s acknowledgment that the cavity (35) is clearly the region defined within the inner tubular member, Applicant has now amended Claims 1, 13 and 23 to recite “said inner tubular member comprising a cavity” and, thus, submits that the Claims have been clarified. If, however, Examiner still believes there is some ambiguity remaining in Claims 1, 13 and 23, Applicant

respectfully requests that Examiner telephone Applicant's attorney of record to discuss the feasibility of an Examiner's Amendment correcting any such ambiguity and, thus, expediting placement of the case in condition for allowance.

Examiner has further rejected Claim 12 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, stating that it is unclear as to what a "selectively removably positionable" silicone bead, tape, or elastomeric washer would look like when employed with the present invention. In response thereto, Applicant respectfully submits that in view of the current amendments to Claim 12 presented herein, Examiner's instant rejection is now moot.

Examiner has stated that Claims 3, 10 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response thereto, Applicant has now amended Independent Claim 1 to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to include the claimed subject matter of Claim 3 (now cancelled). Accordingly, allowance of Claims 1, 2 and 4-12 is respectfully requested.

Examiner has further stated that Claims 13-31 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action. In response thereto, Applicant respectfully submits that the claim amendments presented hereinabove overcome said rejections and, thus, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of Claims 13-31.

CONCLUSION

The above-made amendments are to form only and thus, no new matter was added. Applicant respectfully believes the above-made amendments now place the Claims and application in condition for allowance. Applicant expressly reserves all rights to file continuation applications incorporating in whole or in part the cancelled claims or canceled subject matter thereof. Should there be any questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted this 15th day of March, 2006.



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